

Congressional Nuclear Security Leaders Introduce Resolution to Halt US-Russia Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement

Washington, D.C. -- Congressman Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE), co-founder of the Congressional Nuclear Security Caucus, and Congressman Edward Markey (D-MA), founder of the House Bipartisan Task Force on Nonproliferation, have taken action to halt a civil nuclear cooperation agreement between the United States and Russia, citing Russia's ongoing involvement in Iran's development of nuclear weapons capability and advanced conventional weapons. The two congressional nuclear security leaders introduced H. J. Res. 85, a bipartisan joint resolution of disapproval for the United States-Russia civil nuclear cooperation agreement, which the White House submitted for congressional review on May 10, 2010.

Under United States law, a congressional resolution of disapproval passed by both the House of Representatives and Senate would prevent the President from implementing this civil nuclear cooperation agreement.

"Russia needs to decide who it will be; a nation that stops the spread of nuclear weapons capabilities or accommodates it," Fortenberry said. "Any nuclear agreement with Russia, particularly given its willingness to collaborate with the nuclear activities of Iran and Syria, deserves the closest scrutiny and examination. Congress must assert itself."

"Sadly, the reasons for opposition to this agreement have not changed in two years," added Markey. "Russia continues to train Iranian nuclear physicists, supply to Iran sensitive nuclear technology, and give secret instruction on Russian soil to the Iranian Revolutionary Guard on the use of the advanced S-300 interceptor-missile systems."

Under the last Administration, the United States-Russia civil nuclear cooperation agreement was withdrawn after Russia's 2008 armed conflict with Georgia. Russian forces continue to remain today in Georgia's separatist regions.

Fortenberry is a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the National Security Subcommittee of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

See below for the Fortenberry-Markey Dear Colleague, which elaborates on key concerns with the agreement.

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Russia Should Not Receive U.S. Civil Nuclear Cooperation

From: The Honorable Jeff Fortenberry

Bill: H.J.Res. 85

Date: 5/24/2010

**Does Russia Want Nuclear Cooperation with the United States OR Iran and Syria?
BECAUSE IT SHOULDN'T HAVE BOTH**

Dear Colleague:

Earlier this month, the Administration resubmitted the proposed U.S.-Russian civil nuclear cooperation agreement for congressional review. The last Administration withdrew the agreement from congressional review both after bipartisan objections from the House of Representatives and Senate, and after Russia's August 2008 armed conflict with Georgia.

Under U.S. law, the agreement will automatically enter into force after 90 days of continuous session unless both the House of Representatives and Senate vote to stop it. We oppose this agreement, and have introduced a joint resolution of disapproval (H. J. Res 85) to block its entry into force.

It is our contention that Congress should not allow the proposed U.S.-Russian civil nuclear cooperation agreement to enter into force for the following reasons:

- **Russia continues to assist Iran's controversial nuclear program.** Russia has a \$1 billion contract for the construction of Iran's large nuclear reactor at Bushehr, which is scheduled to become fully operational this year. This effort includes several shipments of nuclear fuel, the training of hundreds of Iranian nuclear scientists, and the continued presence of as many as 2000 Russian nuclear experts on Iranian soil.
- **Russia has sold Iran advanced conventional weapons and air-defense systems, and assisted Iran's ballistic missile production program.** Russia has delivered as many as 30 Tor M1 advanced anti-aircraft missile systems to Iran, and intends to deliver the sophisticated S-300 anti-aircraft missile system. Iran is using these systems to protect its nuclear facilities.

The Director of National Intelligence has publicly assessed that Russian entities "continue to provide assistance to Iran's ballistic missile program," and have "helped Iran move toward self-sufficiency in the production of ballistic missiles."

- **Russian entities continue to sell WMD-related technologies to Iran and other countries of concern, resulting in U.S. sanctions.** In December 2009, the Washington Post reported Iran's 2007 purchase of a Russian-made, high-speed laboratory camera used to calibrate the explosive shock waves that trigger nuclear detonations. That camera model was developed by a commercial spinoff of the All-Russia Research Institute of Experimental

Physics, Russia's premier nuclear weapons laboratory.

Since 2001, the U.S. Government has sanctioned at least ten Russian entities on eleven separate occasions, including the state-designated arms exporter, Rosoboronexport.

- **Russia still occupies parts of Georgia.** The last Administration withdrew the U.S.-Russian civil nuclear cooperation agreement from Congressional review after Russia and Georgia's tense relations exploded into a sustained armed conflict in August 2008. The current Administration asserts that "the situation in Georgia need no longer be considered an obstacle to proceeding with the proposed Agreement." However, Russian forces remain in Georgia's separatist regions, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, in violation of a cease-fire agreement.
- **Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and Syrian President Bashar Assad recently discussed the possibility of Russian-Syrian nuclear cooperation.** Despite the fact that Syria is a signatory to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and therefore forbidden from seeking nuclear weapons, Israeli warplanes bombed a site where Syria apparently was building, with aid from North Korea, a nuclear reactor capable of producing weapons-usable nuclear material. While in Syria, President Medvedev also met with exiled Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal.

We urge you to co-sponsor H. J. Res 85. For more information or to co-sponsor this Joint Resolution of Disapproval, please contact Dr. Katie Matthews in Congressman Markey's office at 202-225-2836 or katie.matthews@mail.house.gov, or Robert Zarate in Congressman Fortenberry's office at 202-225-4806 or robert.zarate@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely

/s/

EDWARD MARKEY
Member of Congress

/s/

JEFF FORTENBERRY
Member of Congress